

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 EA-10 FRB-03 INR-10 NEA-10 NSAE-00 ICA-11
OPIC-03 SP-02 TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00
OMB-01 SS-15 /110 W
-----073093 110241Z /75

R 101912Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4168
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 03802

USEEC AND USOECD ALSO FOR EMBASSIES

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, SP
SUBJECT: UGT CONGRESS AND AFL-CIO

1. IT APPEARS THAT THE SOCIALIST UGT HAS ABOUT DECIDED
NOT RPT NOT TO INVITE THE AFL-CIO TO ITS 31ST CONGRESS
TO BE HELD IN BARCELONA MAY 25-28, 1978, A DECISION
WHICH COULD DO CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE TO U.S.-SPANISH TRADE
UNION RELATIONS. THE UGT FEARS THAT "UNCONTROLLABLE"
RADICAL LEFT ELEMENTS MIGHT ATTEMPT TO STIR UP ANTI-
AMERICAN SENTIMENTS AND THUS DISRUPT THE CONGRESS. FROM
THE TIME THE EMBASSY FIRST BECAME AWARE OF THIS PROBLEM,
WE HAVE MADE A NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIONS, INCLUDING AT
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THE AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL, TO UGT SEC GEN REDONDO AND
OTHER TOP UGT OFFICIALS, URGING THAT THE AFL-CIO BE
SENT A FRATERNAL INVITATION, AND POINTING OUT THE
UNFAVORABLE REPERCUSSIONS SHOULD THE AMERICANS NOT BE
INVITED. (THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS INCLUDING THE DETAILS
OF OUR REPRESENTATIONS ARE BEING AIR POUCHED IN
MEMORANDUM FORM TO EUR/WE AND S/IL.)

2. IN AN EFFORT TO ASSURE THAT THE UGT UNDERSTANDS FULLY THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS DECISION IN TERMS OF FUTURE U.S.-SPANISH TRADE UNION RELATIONSHIPS, THE AMBASSADOR ON APRIL 7 SPOKE PERSONALLY TO UGT SECGEN NICOLAS REDONDO. HE TOLD HIM THAT MR. MEANY AND THE AFL-CIO HAD BEEN GOOD FRIENDS OF THE UGT, THAT THEY HAD REFUSED ANY CONTACT WITH THE OLD SPANISH SYNDICAL ORGANIZATION, THAT REDONDO HAD BEEN RECEIVED BY MEANY AND BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (MAY 1977), AND THAT NON-INVITATION COULD HARDLY HELP HAVING A NEGATIVE EFFECT.

3. REDONDO SAID THAT THE DECISION HAD BEEN MADE TO INVITE ONLY THOSE UNIONS HAVING PARTICULAR RELEVANCE, THAT TRADE UNIONISM, COMING AFTER 40 YEARS OF FRANCO, WAS JUST DEVELOPING IN SPAIN, AND THAT HE DID NOT WANT ANY DUST-UP AT THE CONGRESS BY THOSE WANTING TO CAUSE PROBLEMS. HE DECLARED THAT HE AND THE UGT HAD GREAT RESPECT FOR THE AFL-CIO AND THAT THE DECISION SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED AS CONVEYING ANY DISRESPECT. HE HOPED THAT THE EMBASSY COULD EXPLAIN THIS TO THE AFL-CIO.

4. THE AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED THAT HE FULLY RECOGNIZED THE UGT'S RIGHT TO MAKE THIS DECISION, THAT HE WAS NOT PRESSURING, BUT RATHER EMPHASIZING THE NEGATIVE EFFECT SUCH A DECISION MIGHT HAVE ON THE AFL-CIO, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND THAT HE WAS SPEAKING AS A FRIEND IN THIS SITUATION. THE AMBASSADOR ALSO SUGGESTED THAT REDONDO MIGHT SEND A MESSAGE TO MEANY EXPLAINING THE RATIONALE HIMSELF, AS THAT MIGHT HELP. REDONDO REPLIED THAT HE WOULD TAKE NOTE OF THE AMBASSADOR'S SUGGESTION REGARDING A MESSAGE FROM HIM TO MEANY.

5. EMBASSY BELIEVES IT HAS DONE ALL IT CAN USEFULLY AT THIS TIME TO IMPRESS ON THE UGT THE UNFAVORABLE REPERCUSSIONS OF A NEGATIVE DECISION ON THE ISSUE OF INVITING THE AFL-CIO TO THE CONGRESS. AS THE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS IT, THE FINAL DECISION ON THE MATTER OF INVITATIONS TO FOREIGN ORGANIZATIONS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE UGT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WHICH HAS NOT FORMALLY MADE UP ITS MIND ON THE QUESTION, ALTHOUGH IT WOULD APPEAR FROM REDONDO'S COMMENTS TO THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE DIE IN FACT IS CAST. STABLER

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